

REMARKS

Claims 1-7, 10-17, and 25-27 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1 has been amended. Support for the amendment to claim 1 is found at least at page 8, lines 11-12, and at page 10, lines 18-20, of the specification. Claims 25-27 have been added. Support for claims 25 and 26 is found at least at page 9, lines 16-25, of the specification. Support for claim 27 is found at least at page 8, line 21, of the specification. No new matter has been added.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended by Examiner Jackson to Applicants' representative during the October 18, 2010 telephone interview. The following remarks constitute Applicants' separate statement of the substance of interview.

Claims 1-7 and 10-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent No. 6,514,357 to Tada et al. in view of US Patent No. 4,126,595 to Martorano et al.

Claim 1, as amended, recites that the pH of the formulation is controlled by the nature and concentration of the (meth)acrylic acid units and the at least one comonomer which comprises acidic groups but is other than (meth)acrylic acid. At least this feature cannot reasonably be considered to be suggested by the applied citations.

As discussed during the October 18 telephone interview, Tada suggests, at col. 6, lines 14-25, that the pH of the composition is adjusted by adding an acid, such as acetic acid or nitric acid. Tada fails to suggest that the pH is adjusted by the amount and type of acidic groups of the water-dispersible resin suggested therein.

Examiner Jackson inquired during the October 18 interview if Applicants can provide experimental data that compares the instantly claimed subject matter to the applied citations. Applicants note that currently no further experimental data is available.

Claim 1 further recites treating the surface with an acidic aqueous formulation having a pH of from 1 to 6 of a polymer. As appreciated by the Examiner, Martorano fails to suggest

comparable features. Instead, Martorano suggests an alkaline mixture. See, for example, col. 21, line 61, of Martorano.

Moreover, Applicants respectfully submit that the applied citations fail to suggest a process comprising synthesizing the copolymer A from 70 to 80% by weight of (meth)acrylic acid and from 20 to 30% by weight of maleic anhydride, as recited in added claim 25, synthesizing the copolymer A from 70 to 80% by weight of (meth)acrylic acid, from 15 to 25% by weight of maleic anhydride, and from 1 to 10% by weight of vinylphosphonic acid, as recited in added claim 26, or a further comonomer comprising OH groups, as recited in claim 27.

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 22-0185, under Order No. 12810-00237-US1 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: November 23, 2010

Respectfully submitted,

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